

electronews

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FROM THE MANAGER

The Impact of New Tax Laws



Shane Laws

As the Kansas Legislature was working toward adjournment, a number of political headlines were made regarding utility rates and taxes.

When the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law on Dec. 22, 2017, there was an almost immediate focus across the country on lower income tax rates for utilities. Kansas has been no different with political and regulatory leaders immediately calling for the savings to be passed on to ratepayers.

And while action was swift to make headlines, affected utilities already had a precedent from the 1986 Tax Reform Act to return those savings. The impact of the reduction in federal tax rates from 35 to 21 percent is projected to cut Westar's tax bill by at least \$65 million. KCP&L has indicated

approximately \$35 million in savings could be allocated to Kansas customers. So while a refund isn't in question, some in the Legislature have expressed frustration that the return may be bundled with other rate adjustments and/or won't occur until later this year.

Will My Cooperative Be Affected by the Tax Law?

The impact on Victory Electric is much different. Like most of the 30 electric cooperative entities headquartered in Kansas, we are IRS tax exempt entities and therefore have no federal income tax liability. Cooperative members won't receive a tax-related refund because there is no federal income tax expense

Continued on page 16C ▶

Cooperative members won't receive a tax-related refund because there is no federal income tax expense included in your electric rate.



Memorial Day Closing

Our office will be closed on Monday, May 28, in observation of Memorial Day. We would like to thank all who have served our country.

Energy Efficiency Tips of the Month



Making small adjustments in when, where and how you use electricity won't only help control your energy costs, but it can also keep temperatures in your home more pleasant.

Avoiding peak energy costs is a good reason to put some chores on hold, at least until power demand dips. Consider some of the jobs one kilowatt hour (kWh) of electricity can do before you use it:

- ▶ Wash three loads of laundry
- ▶ Complete one dryer cycle
- ▶ Vacuum rugs in two average homes
- ▶ Iron five shirts
- ▶ Run three cycles in a loaded dishwasher

Your heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system or heat pump can play a huge part in controlling your energy use, even if family comfort is a top priority. At 78 degrees, most people are comfortable outside, so why not outdoors? The closer your air conditioner or heat pump setting is to the outdoor temperature, the less your unit will run. Each degree represents a percentage of the total cooling load. That means that when temperatures are in the high 80s, you could reduce your cooling demand by 10 to 15 percent for each degree above 75 degrees.

Bring the family together. Getting control of your energy use to reduce your home's overall demand can be challenging when you consider the whole home. Beat the peak and save by having the family consume energy in the same room—together.

Members Win FREE CFL

Every month Victory Electric gives away free CFL light bulbs to members. ***This month's lucky winners are...***

JESSICA CALVO, CHRIS DOUSSA, BURTON JAMES, ELLIOT LINKE, JOSE PLAMA, YEIMI ROMO and RAMONA VALADEZ. Come by Victory Electric's office to get your free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). Congratulations winners!



Safety Promoted at 'Day on the Farm' in Gray County



Linemen Kyndell Penick (left) and Jacob Ledford tell students the dangers associated with high voltage power lines.

Cimarron students and community members learned about electrical safety. "Day on the Farm" hosted by Cimarron FFA at the high school.

Victory Electric demonstrated the dangers associated with high voltage power lines.

"There is great danger with power lines," said **MIKEY GODDARD**, vice president of safety. "Teaching everyone, not just kids, how to avoid the danger is something we take very seriously."

Victory Electric's operations department has a large trailer to demonstrate the hazards connected with electricity. **JACOB LEDORD** and **KYNDELL PENICK**, Victory Electric linemen demonstrated the difference between insulators and conductors.

Students also learned what to do if they see a downed power line and how to respond if they come into contact with a downed line.

Any organization has the opportunity to see the demonstration. Interested organizations can contact Mikey Goddard at 620-227-2139 for scheduling.



Jacob Ledford shows an elementary student the electrical damage done to the hot dog, which demonstrates the human body as a conductor.

Co-op Welcomes New IT Team Member



Brent Nau

Victory Electric is pleased to announce the hiring of **BRENT NAU**. He is a business intelligence analyst.

Nau joins the team from FairPoint Communications where he has served as manager of reporting and data analysis since 2001.

"I am looking forward to working for such a great company," Nau said. "I have heard nothing but great things about Victory Electric and their employees."

Nau received his degree in data processing from Saint Mary of the Plains College and is skilled in creating and manipulating Crystal Reports, which is what Victory Electric will be using to create a business intelligence system.

Crystal Reports is a business intelligence applications and used to generate reports from a wide range of data sources. These reports will allow Victory Electric to continue streamlining internal processes. Streamlining processes benefits members with greater service, hopeful shorter wait times on the phone and during outages

and more.

"Brent's skills and experience will allow us to hit the ground running with our business intelligence initiative," said Denzil McGill, vice president of IT. "To find a skill like his is a true blessing. I can't wait to discover the many ways we will be able to leverage our existing data to continue momentum of improving processes. I think in two years we're going to look back and wonder how ever got by without a resource like this. It's going to be that transformative."

In this era of data collection and mobility, adding Nau is natural step as the cooperative starts to use more of the data collected for operations, safety, work orders and engineering.

"There is already a great need to customize existing financial and HR reports," McGill said. "Plus the benefit of creating new reports that we've only hoped for before now."

Nau is a Dodge City native and is married to Desiree. They have four children: Teghan, 27, Taryn, 24, Jadon, 17, and Jocelyn, 14. He enjoys spending time with his family, fishing and hunting.

Victory Electric is excited to have Brent join us and we look forward to what he will do for our members.

The Impact of New Tax Laws

Continued from page 16A ▶

included in your electric rate.

Your electric cooperative operates as a not-for-profit entity and rates are designed to recover the cost of operation. We do not have stockholders demanding a return on investment. We have member-owners who elect trustees to determine the cooperative's course, including appropriate electric rates. Changes to our cost of operation from generation and transmission, vendors, regulatory agencies, as well as property and income taxes are reflected in rates set by the members rather than the Legislature or the Kansas Corporation Commission.

This regulatory framework fits two of the seven important cooperative principles—democratic member control and member economic participation—and helps Victory Electric meet its mission to deliver affordable and reliable electric service. **Thanks, Shane**

Lowery Retires After Nearly 40 Years of Service



Dave Lowery

Victory Electric Journeyman **DAVE LOWERY** will retire after 39 years of service.

The Ohio native oved to Dodge City in the mid-70s and worked as a contractor before beginning his career with Aquila as a second-year apprentice lineman.

Lowery earned his journeyman status while at Victory Electric and has worked

with several crews.

"I learned everything hands on," Lowery said. "It has been a good career."

Lowery announced his retirement and will use his accrued vacation time before retiring on April 20.

"I am going to spend my time raising cattle, farming and riding horses," Lowery said. "I have four horses and a mule who all need some time on them. Now, I will have the time to do it."

Lowery has three sons and two grandkids, with one on the way. "I will spend more time with them," he said. "They don't all live in Dodge so seeing them more will be nice."

Lowery is also very active with the Dodge City Roundup and still serves as a board member on the Prairie Circuit.

"I've served on the Roundup since 1987 and have worked all of the ranks from member to president from 2000 to 2001. It's something I really have enjoyed," Lowery said. "I love rodeo. I don't compete anymore, but I like being involved."

Victory Electric wishes Dave a relaxing retirement and thanks him for his many years of service.

VICTORY ELECTRIC'S SAFETY SHARE

Keeps Kids Safe as They Head Outdoors

When temperatures begin to rise, outdoor areas begin to fill with both children and adults enjoying the weather. It's easy for the electrical equipment that we see every day to fade into the background, but it's important to take safety precautions around it. Take time to explain to your kids how to be safe around electricity before they head outdoors.

Safe Electricity provides the following tips to share with kids when having a conversation about how to stay safe around outdoor electrical equipment.

- ▶ Always stress the importance of safety around electrical substations. Never enter an electrical substation for any reason. Even if a pet has entered inside or a ball goes over the fence, do not go in. Call the electrical utility for help. Substations should only be entered by professionals.
- ▶ Kites should only be flown during good weather conditions and in large, open areas like a park or a field. Always look up and check for the location of overhead power lines and other electrical equipment, so that you can be sure to fly kites far away from them. A kite string can conduct electricity from an overhead line directly to the person on the ground.
- ▶ Before climbing a tree, check that the tree and its branches are not located near any overhead power lines. Climbing a tree in contact with a power line can energize the tree with electricity and lead to electric shock or death. Pay attention to trees and power lines. Do not plant trees near them, and if there is a tree that has grown into a power line, make sure to call a professional to trim the tree.
- ▶ Never throw objects at power lines.
- ▶ If you ever see downed electrical wires, stay far away. Call 911 to have the utility notified. Downed lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be



carrying electricity and be dangerous. If something gets stuck in a power line, call Victory Electric; never try to retrieve it.

- ▶ Do not play with, tamper with, or open outdoor electrical boxes. They contain electrical equipment for underground service to homes and businesses.
- ▶ Do not climb on top of transformers. Transformers can be dangerous and contain parts that allow electricity to get to your home.
- ▶ Check the forecast before going outside. Do not plan outdoor activities if a thunderstorm is expected because there is no safe place from lightning when you are outside. It is important to follow the advice of the National Weather Service, "When thunder roars, go indoors."
- ▶ Make sure all outdoor outlets are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to help prevent

electric shock and make sure no frayed wires are plugged in.

- ▶ Keep all long-handled tools out of reach of children so they will not be tempted to reach for or accidentally hit an overhead power line.

Adults should also be cautious when playing outside with their toys. Never fly remote controlled toys or drones near power lines.

"Safety is a top concern for everyone at Victory Electric," said Mikey Goddard, vice president of safety. "It is great to be outdoors and enjoying time with our families and we never want a safety issue to violate our fun. Stay safe. Look up and know your surroundings."

Summer brings temperatures that have most of us wanting to go outside and following these simple tips from safeelectricity.org can keep you and your children safe.

Victory Announces 2018 Scholarship Winners

Victory Electric is proud to introduce the 10 area students who won the Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship for the program's third year.

The scholarship program was open to eligible high school seniors and college students and was designed to recognize students who have demonstrated academic success as well as showing commitment to bettering their communities.

The 10 local students whose families are served by Victory Electric each earned a \$1,000 scholarship.

- ▶ **DEREK BOGNER** of Cimarron, son of Jeff and Chandra Bogner, and a senior at Cimarron High School.
- ▶ **HAYLEE BROWN** of Ensign, daughter of Tim and Jackie Brown, and a senior at South Gray High School.
- ▶ **ANDREA BRYANT** of Cimarron, daughter of Gary and Melinda Bryant, and a junior at Kansas State University.
- ▶ **MIREYA CHACON** of Dodge City, daughter of Mario and Idalia Chacon, and a senior at Dodge City High School.
- ▶ **SYDNEY FOSTER** of Dodge City, daughter of Dave and Summer Foster, and a senior at Dodge City High School.
- ▶ **FAITH IMEL** of Bucklin, daughter of Matt and Danielle Imel, and a senior at Bucklin High School.
- ▶ **KAMERON LOWERY** of Dodge City, daughter of Matt and Tavi Lowery, and a senior at Dodge City High School.
- ▶ **JUSTIN MORRISON** of Cimarron, son of Clint and Loretta Morrison, and a senior at 4M Academy.
- ▶ **AIDAN TRENT** of Dodge City, son of Kerry and Terri Trent, and a senior at Dodge City High School.

Proud to reward students for their academic success and dedication to their community.

▶ **MADELYN WRIGHT** of Dodge City, daughter of Brendan Wright and Dawnelle Priest, and a senior at Dodge City High School.

"We congratulate the 2018 scholarship winners and are proud to reward the students for their academic success and dedication to their community," said Shane Laws, Victory Electric CEO. "As a not-for-profit cooperative, one of our guiding principles is 'Commitment to Community,' and I can't think of a better way than a scholarship program to give back to the communities we serve and encourage youth to be involved in their own community."

The name of the scholarship honors the Lightner family of Plymell. Richard Lightner served on Victory Electric's board of trustees for 35 years and his father, George, served 31 years previous. Both strongly supported Victory Electric's community and youth programs.

To be eligible, each applicant must be an active member in good standing with the cooperative, or a dependent of such member. An applicant must be a student or entering an accredited college or university. Victory Electric continues to offer these scholarships. Applications can be downloaded on our website at victoryelectric.net.

Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship Winners

Victory congratulates this year's Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship winners and thanks all who applied.

Eligible applicants must be a senior in high school or a current college student who is an active member or dependent of such member of Victory Electric in good standing with the co-op. For more information about our scholarship program, please visit victoryelectric.net.



Derek Bogner
Cimarron



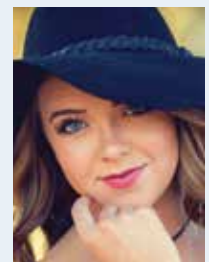
Haylee Brown
South Gray



Andrea Bryant
Kansas State



Mireya Chacon
Dodge City



Sydney Foster
Dodge City



Faith Imel
Bucklin



Kameron Lowery
Dodge City



Justin Morrison
4M Academy



Aidan Trent
Dodge City



Madelyn Wright
Dodge City

Victory's 73rd Annual Meeting a Success



More than 900 people enjoy a steak dinner at the 73rd Annual Meeting held at the Western State Bank Expo Center.

Every year, Victory Electric looks forward to hosting the annual meeting for our members, and this year was no exception. The annual meeting is a great time to get to know our members and to offer information on the activities of the cooperative.

Victory's annual meeting was April 17, at the Western State Bank Expo. Approximately 611 members were present, and more than 967 people were served a steak dinner.

In addition to the business meeting, members heard presentations from board president John Leis and the 2017 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp winners. The 2018 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp winners and the Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship winners were also introduced. Prizes and bill credits were awarded after the meeting.

The results of the election for four districts on the board of trustees were announced: **DARYL TIEBEN**, Dodge City, District 1; **KEN SCHULTE**, Spearville, District 3, **CEDRIC DREWES**, Dodge City, District 8; and **TERRI LARSON**, Dodge City, District 10; were re-elected in their districts.

We look forward to seeing you next year at the 74th Annual Meeting.

Thank you to all who attended this year's annual meeting!



Jessica Mashak (left) and Alexa Lozano register members at the annual meeting.



Shane Laws, CEO, addresses members at the annual meeting.



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1. The Victory Electric board listens to the meeting presentation.
2. Lineman Jacob Ledford serves cake.
3. Substation technician Richard Torres (left) and lineman Ross Ackerman prepare water for members.
4. Board members and executive administrative administrator Rae Jean (right) listen to the meeting.
5. Diamond Carbajal, daughter of member service representative Rubi Carbajal sang the national anthem.
6. Lineman Kyndell Penick (left) , Justin Straight and Mikey Goddards, vice president of safety, present information with the hotline safety demonstration.
7. Daniel Pogue presents a prize to a winning member.

Change Habits to Beat the Peak this Summer

As warmer weather sets in, our thoughts on keeping the house comfortable switch from heating to cooling. But as temperatures rise and air conditioners are switched on, looking for ways to improve energy efficiency at home can help you and Flint Hills RECA reduce demand, saving energy and money.

Making small adjustments in when, where and how you use electricity will help control your energy costs, and it can also help keep temperatures in your home more pleasant on sultry days.

Housework Hiatus

Avoiding peak energy costs is a good reason to put some chores on hold, at least until power demand dips. Consider some of the jobs one kilowatt-hour (kWh) of electricity can do before you use it:

- ▶ Wash three loads of laundry
- ▶ Complete one dryer cycle
- ▶ Vacuum rugs in two average homes
- ▶ Iron five shirts
- ▶ Run three cycles in a loaded dishwasher

All of these activities can be done outside of peak demand periods, also known as peak hours.

Love 78

Your heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system or heat pump can play a huge part in controlling your



Full loads mean fewer cycles, and washers and dryers running in the late evenings add less heat and humidity to the home. Energy can cost less outside of peak hours.

energy use year-round, even if family comfort is a top priority.

At 78 degrees, most people are comfortable outside, so why not indoors? Most people aren't sensitive enough to notice much of a difference in air temperature whether the thermostat is set at 73 or raised to 78. But the closer your air conditioner or heat pump setting is to the outdoor temperature, the less your unit will run. Each degree difference represents a percentage of the total cooling load. That means that when temperatures are in the high 80s, you could reduce your cooling demand by 10 to 15 percent for each degree above 75 degrees.

Fans offer an economical alternative to air conditioning on mild days, and they can improve comfort as temperatures climb. The air movement from the ceiling fan lowers the temperature by creating a "wind chill" effect. Set them to spin counterclockwise during warmer months so they push air down and make you feel cooler.

Central air conditioning can use as much as 1 kWh of electricity for each 12-minute cycle. A ceiling fan can operate for about 13 hours on the same amount of electricity, and a floor or table fan, depending on size, might run for 10 hours per kWh of power. But don't forget to turn off fans when you leave a room, because they cool people, not space.

Kitchen Comfort

When it comes to heat and humidity, changing your kitchen activities presents a wellspring of opportunities to reduce your household energy demand throughout the day.

Your stove represents the modern hearth, and all the things that make the kitchen a favorite gathering place in winter can help send your electric meter into overdrive from late spring through early fall. According to researchers at North Carolina State University, in Raleigh, cooking dinner for a family of four on an electric range releases about 20

ounces of water vapor into the air, and that amount can triple with a gas range.

Appliances on your countertops or stashed in your pantry could keep you cooler and use less energy. Microwaves use about 60 percent as much energy as full-size ovens, and a toaster oven or induction cooker consumes about half as much power.

Share the Space

In simpler times, families spent more time together in the same room even as they pursued different interests. Some members might read books or magazines under the light of shared lamp, while others watched television or played board games. Today, it's common for everyone to retreat to separate spaces, turn on their electronics, adjust their ceiling fans or window unit air conditioners and close their doors to cocoon in their own environments.

Getting control of your energy use to reduce your home's overall demand can be really challenging when you have to consider the entire home, so bring back family time to beat the peak.

LCD televisions generally use 60 percent as much electricity as comparably sized plasma models. One laptop computer uses about 20 percent as much power as a desktop computer and monitor. And today's home assistant devices can play music using about 17 percent of the energy on a component stereo system, or about as much power as the boom box you use on the beach.

A video game console consumes about 200 watts of power. One system pressed into service for spirited intramural competition between family members in one room uses about a third of the power of three players engaged in online games around the house.

Finish the space with energy-efficient LED fixtures for lighting, a couple sets of headphones and a few rechargeable power boosters for the family's handheld devices. You'll have a cool and fun place to spend a few hours with the family.